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STRENGTHENING AND PROTECTING AMERICA: HOMELAND SECURITY

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 and subsequent terrorist threats to our nation have forced the federal government to re-evaluate the manner and priority given to our homeland defenses. To aid in the prevention of another attack on U.S. soil, we must strengthen the ability of all our first responders. Emergency planners, law enforcement officials, and the National Guard must have the resources to plan for and respond to all future incidents – whether they are man-made or natural.

There is no room for complacency with regard to the security of our homeland. Congress must protect the country by implementing the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission as well as reinforcing security at our ports, borders, transportation system, and other critical infrastructure.

PORT AND MARITIME SECURITY

Ports are responsible for 75 percent of international commerce that enters the United States. Philadelphia is home to the world's largest freshwater port and one of the nation's strategic military seaports. Representative Schwartz knows that the continued economic vitality of the region and the United States depends on keeping the Port of Philadelphia, and the nation's 360 other port facilities, safe and secure.

The proposed takeover of six U.S. Ports, including the Port of Philadelphia, by Dubai Ports World (DPW), a United Arab Emirate-controlled company, highlighted the importance of these facilities. Representative Schwartz believes that the operation or ownership of this critical infrastructure should never be put into the hands of a nation with ties to terrorism.

The DPW situation also underscored the scant attention paid to port security by the Republican leadership in Congress. Since 2002, the Bush Administration and Republican majority have provided only 16 percent of the funds needed to secure our ports. And under this failed leadership only 5 percent of the cargo entering U.S. ports is scanned. Since coming to office, Representative Schwartz has been working to fix these shortfalls and to ensure necessary investments in port security. She is also a leading supporter of a plan, the *Sail Only if Scanned Act*, to require the scanning of all – 100 percent – of cargo entering our ports.

TRANSPORTATION SECURITY

The July 7, 2005 bombings of the London transit system made clear that steps must be taken to secure all aspects of our transportation infrastructure. Each day, passenger rail systems in the U.S. carry about five times more passengers than the nation's airlines. Yet since 2001, the federal government has invested approximately 60 times more in aviation security than transit security.

Representative Schwartz has spearheaded Congressional efforts to ensure that SEPTA and the Philadelphia Police Department have the resources they need to prevent, or respond to, a mass

incident within the subway system. Additionally, Representative Schwartz has called on the Department of Homeland Security to develop a comprehensive security strategy to protect our intercity and commuter rail systems. Representative Schwartz joined two of her colleagues from the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee in introducing a proposal that would allow Amtrak to better invest in security enhancements and improved service.

BORDER SECURITY

The United States must secure its borders. In particular, we must put an end to illegal immigration by bolstering security at ports of entry and at our borders, including along the U.S.-Mexico border which runs for 2,000 miles through open, desert terrain. Representative Schwartz believes we need a force with 24-hour operational control and coverage along our borders. To meet this need, Representative Schwartz voted to implement the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission to put 12,000 Border Patrol agents and 8,000 Immigrations and Customs Enforcement officers into service by 2010.

DEFEATING TERRORISM WITH QUALITY INTELLIGENCE AND STRONG ENFORCEMENT

As we continue to build our defenses against an affiliated global network of terrorists, we must ensure that our counter-terrorism intelligence capabilities are robust and efficient. Representative Schwartz has worked to implement the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission, including enabling law enforcement and intelligence communities to share information and better identify and detain terrorists. At the same time, Representative Schwartz has worked to ensure that this authority is used to protect and uphold our constitutionally-guaranteed civil liberties, not to skirt or undermine them. That is why she has called on the Inspectors General of the Departments of Defense and Justice to investigate the Bush Administration-authorized program to secretly conduct surveillance of U.S. citizens.

DISASTER RESPONSE AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Three weeks after Hurricane Katrina made landfall, Representative Schwartz toured the New Orleans region and Southern Mississippi to see firsthand the scope of the devastation. She visited with local and state officials, humanitarian aid volunteers, and members of the Pennsylvania National Guard deployed to the region. This experience underscored the importance that all levels of government must be prepared to react to any disaster.

The Bush Administration's inadequate response to Katrina was unacceptable. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) lacked the necessary leadership to effectively manage the relief efforts. That is why Representative Schwartz called for the removal of then-Director of FEMA, Michael Brown, and has advocated for making FEMA an independent agency that reports directly to the President. In doing so, the federal government would reduce some of the bureaucratic issues that hampered the response to Katrina. Lessons must be learned from Katrina to ensure that the federal government is prepared and has the ability to lead all levels of recovery efforts in future disasters.

Despite the governmental failings in response to Katrina, many brave men and women from all parts of the country volunteered their time to assist with the recovery efforts, including members of FEMA's reservist corps. During emergencies and recovery efforts, FEMA relies on the assistance of thousands of temporary workers, known as Disaster Assistance Employees (DAEs). However, when DAEs are called for duty, they must take a leave of absence from their work with no guarantee that their job will be available when they return. Representative Schwartz believes that DAEs are an indispensable part of our emergency response system whose service should be conducted without fear of losing their job. As such, Representative Schwartz authored the

Disaster Assistance Employment and Reemployment Rights Act – legislation that would extend to DAEs the same deployment and reemployment protections available to National Guard and military reservists.